



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

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Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam

Dedicated to
His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta
Swāmi Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for
Krishna Consciousness



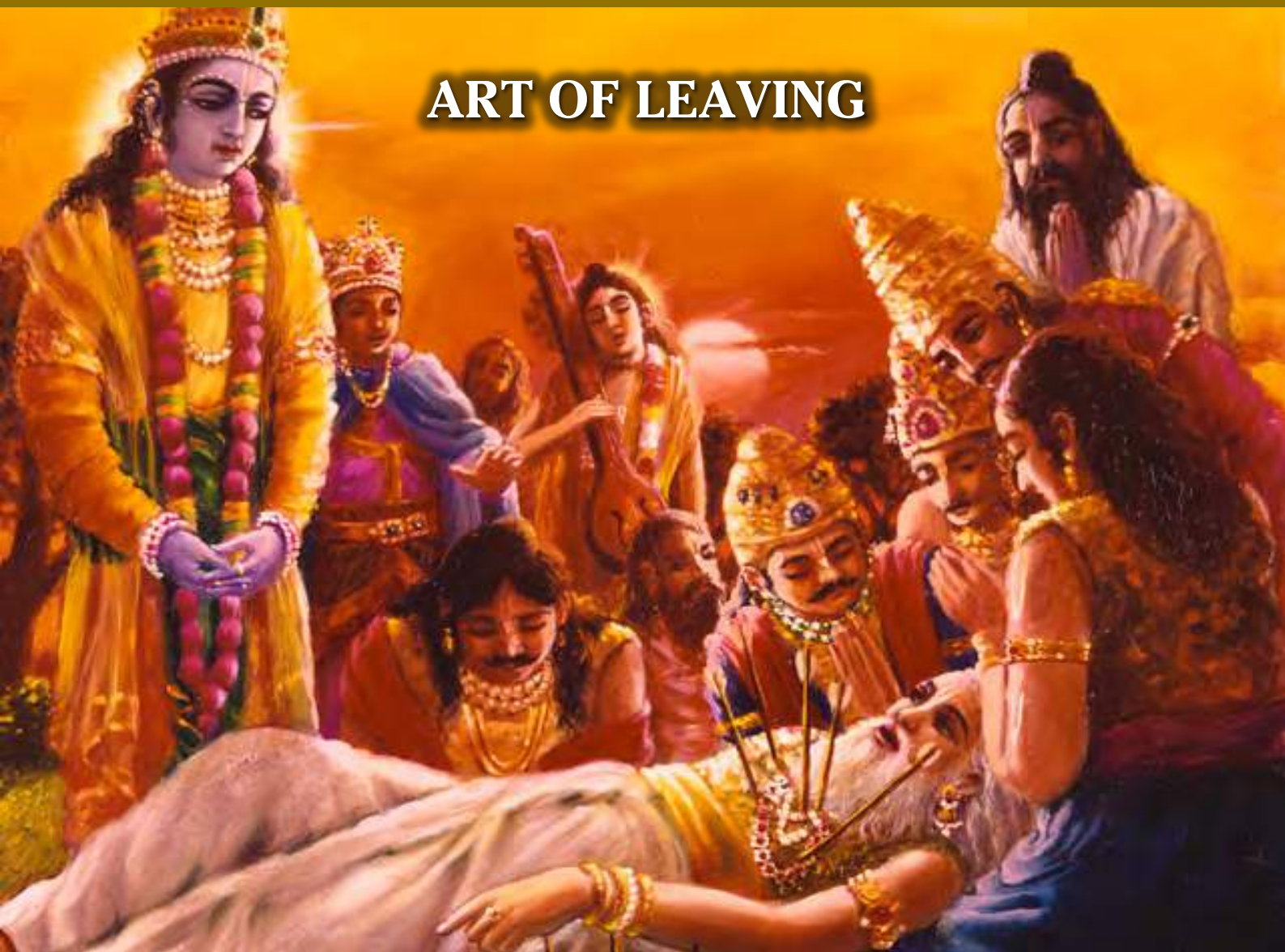
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ART OF LEAVING



ART OF LEAVING



“Life is a preparation and death is an examination.” We often hear this statement. The fact of life is that everyone who had entered a body in this world has to leave it one day. The time duration between one’s birth and death is what we call ‘life.’ Lord Kṛṣṇa says that the consciousness with which one leaves the body decides his or her next destination. Living in this world upholding virtuous principles leads one to leave this world to enter a better world. Apart from attaining a wonderful destination, such a person also leaves behind a legacy and his good example for many others to follow. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam teaches us ‘how to live’ in this world and ‘how to leave’ this world, through various exemplary personalities.

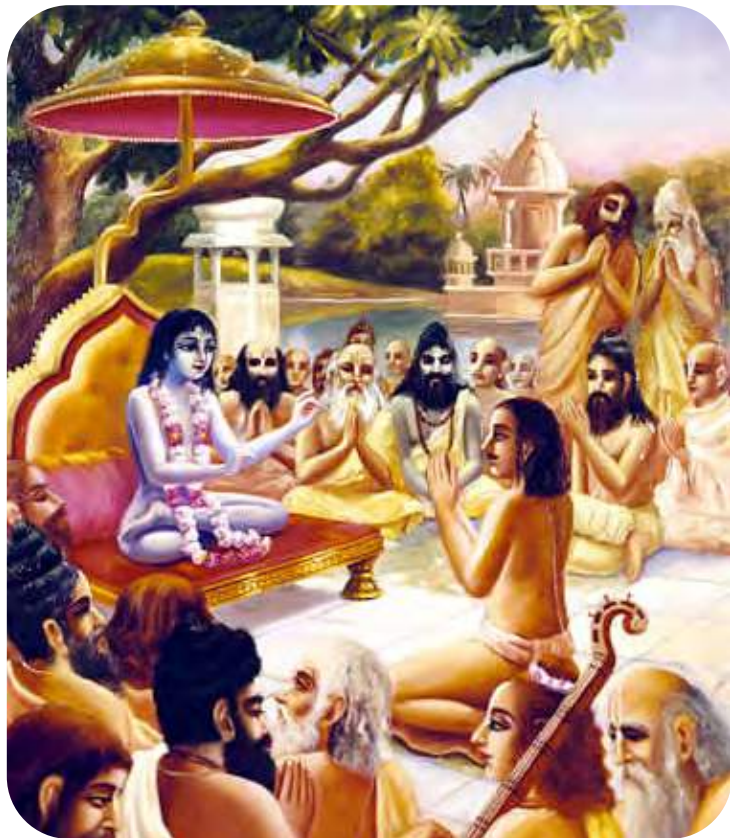
Art Of Living

A human being learns to live in this world based on the knowledge he or she attains from various sources. One’s family, upbringing, association and surroundings shape up one’s thoughts, values and aspirations. However, the rare human life is specially bestowed with higher intelligence and discrimination power. Scriptures advise a human being to live life according to noble values with God consciousness, while doing the needful for one’s survival in this world through honest means. Such living sets right example and inspires others.

*ahimsayā pāramahamsya-caryayā
smṛtyā mukundācaritāgrya-sidhunā
yamair akāmair niyamaiś cāpy anindayā
nirīhayā dvandva-titikṣayā ca*

A candidate for spiritual advancement needs to be nonviolent, follow in the footsteps of great ācāryas, always remember the nectarean pastimes of the Supreme Lord, follow regulative principles without material desire and should not blaspheme others. A devotee should lead a simple life and not be disturbed by the duality of opposing elements, but learn to tolerate them. (SB 4.22.24)





Art of Inquiring

Parīkṣit Mahārāja ruled his citizens following the footsteps of his glorious grandfathers. He even challenged Kali and established a Kṛṣṇa conscious kingdom. Ordained by the Supreme will, he was cursed by a *brāhmaṇa* boy to die in seven days. Seeing this curse as a blessing in disguise, he retired from the political responsibilities and sat on the bank of the Ganges to fast until death. He inquired from the great sages who assembled there, “What is the duty of a person in life in all circumstances? And that of a person who is about to die?” Śukadeva Gosvāmī arrived there as if called for and enlightened Parīkṣit Mahārāja on this topic by speaking the magnum opus literature *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Practically the whole *Bhāgavatam* deals with these two inquiries of Parīkṣit – “How to live? How to leave?” Every human being should ask such relevant questions in life. In essence, Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied that one should hear about Kṛṣṇa, chant His glories and remember Him in all circumstances, for such devotional service is the topmost beneficial activity for the humanity. Lord Kṛṣṇa again descended in the form of the *Bhāgavatam* through the discussion between Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī. This *Bhāgavatam* acts as a transcendental torchlight to show illumination to the misdirected civilization of the Kali-yuga. Having heard the *Bhāgavatam* for seven days, Parīkṣit left this world and went back to Godhead.

Leaving Behind Attachments

The *Bhāgavatam* narrates stories of several saintly kings, also known as *rājarṣis*, who ruled the earth religiously taking care of the citizens’ physical and spiritual needs. When an able successor is ready to take charge of the political responsibilities, these kings would promptly retire to dedicate the rest of their lives in devotional service unto the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Despite great influence, followers, accomplishments and unexcelled facilities, they are detached enough to leave behind all of them. For instance, King Yudhiṣṭira ruled the kingdom religiously as per the knowledge he received from Bhīṣmadeva and Lord Kṛṣṇa. He raised his grandson Parīkṣit with suitable training and before retiring, he entrusted the responsibility of the kingdom to Parīkṣit. Several other saintly kings like Priyavrata, Uttānapāda, Dhruva, Pṛthu, Pracetās and Bharata also depict similar examples of glorious departures from this world to eventually enter into the spiritual world.

Leaving Without Bewilderment

Death is inevitable for any born person. Just as a student who wouldn’t study well throughout the academic year cannot expect good results in the final exam or a good career, a person who lives whimsically throughout one’s lifetime cannot expect a good destination in the next life. Thus one’s leaving this world depends on one’s living in this world. At the time of death, one’s power of remembrance is slackened due to derangement of bodily membranes. For a common man, it is very difficult to remember things as they are at the time of death, but by the grace of the Lord and His bona fide devotees, the spiritual masters, one can remember Kṛṣṇa without difficulty and thus attain the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

*nottamaśloka-vārtānām
juṣatām tat-kathāmr̥tam
syāt sambhramo 'nta-kāle 'pi
smaratām tat-padāmbujam*

Those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead and who are constantly engaged in remembering His lotus feet, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives. (SB 1.18.4)





Leaving Behind A Spiritual Path

Many saints and devotees of the Lord perform unalloyed devotional service throughout their lives and prescribe methods of training people in general on the spiritual path. The *ācārya*'s duty is to find the means by which devotees may render service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus go back to Godhead. Rūpa Gosvāmī, for example published books like *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. An *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord's lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*. (SB 10.2.31 P)

*svayam samuttīrya sudustaram dyuman
bhavārṇavam bhīmam adabhra-sauhrdāḥ
bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvam atra te
nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavān*

The Supreme Lord is always ready to fulfill the desire of His devotees and therefore He is known as a desire tree [*vāñchā-kalpataru*]. When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under His lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because the Lord is very merciful to the other devotees, He accepts this method to help them. (SB 10.2.31)

Leaving Behind Life Teachings

Bhīṣmadeva, the illustrious grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, was a life-long celibate and a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He loved the righteous sons of King Pāṇḍu and as an affectionate grandfather he protected them in various ways. Although being valiant, vastly learned and dedicated to devotional service, Bhīṣma had to fight on the wrong side against the virtuous Pāṇḍavas. It is because Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to teach the world through Bhīṣma that vice cannot conquer virtue regardless of who tries to execute it. However, Kṛṣṇa wanted to glorify His devotee Bhīṣma before his departure from this world. Several great sages and *yogīs* from all over the universe assembled at the deathbed of Bhīṣma as he was instructing Yudhiṣṭira on the dharmas of charity, liberation, rulers, women and devotional service. Having enlightened his grandson, Bhīṣma withdrew all his senses from external objects and focused completely on the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Pārtha-sārathī. He glorified Kṛṣṇa in various ways, offered his fervent prayers and while meditating on the form of the Lord he departed from this world at an auspicious time. Bhīṣma's long life of successes and struggles, his teachings to Yudhiṣṭira and his complete absorption in Kṛṣṇa before leaving this world constitute great instructions for all the devotees.

Leaving Behind Personal Example

Little five-year-old Dhruva was tormented by the harsh words of his stepmother Suruci. Upon being inspired by his own mother Sunīti, and instructed by the great sage Nārada, Dhruva worshipped Lord Kṛṣṇa with a material ambition to attain a position superior to even Brahmā. Within six months he attained the *darśana* of Lord Viṣṇu who gave him benedictions. However, Dhruva's heart had been transformed by his sincere practice of bhakti and the Lord's *darśana* and he regretted for worshipping the Lord with a material desire. Dhruva set an unparalleled example of determination in devotional service at such a young age. His example depicts that anyone, even a child, even with material desires can worship the Supreme Lord and become an object of His mercy. Bhakti unto the Lord will purify one's selfish materially motivated intentions. As ordained by the Lord, Dhruva ruled the earth for thirty-six thousand years and retired. Eventually Vaikuṇṭha airplane came to take him to the abode of the Supreme Lord. Dhruva humbly offered his respects to the sages and boarded the airplane. However, he wasn't willing to go without his mother Sunīti who first inspired him to worship Kṛṣṇa. As his heart was filled with gratitude, he was shown another Vaikuṇṭha airplane in which Sunīti was also going back to Godhead. Dhruva thus went to the Lord's abode. His example gives us lessons on determination, respect and gratitude in *bhakti*.

Leaving Behind A Legacy

Śrīla Prabhupāda dedicated his life to fulfill the instruction of his spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākūra to preach the message of Lord Caitanya in English. At the age of seventy, he travelled to America and started a worldwide spiritual movement. He traveled the globe fourteen times and preached the message of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and inspired millions of followers in Kṛṣṇa-bhakti. He translated the most important Vaiṣṇava literatures into English and wrote several books that guide the humanity on spiritual path. The literatures he left behind are translated into various languages and are distributed all over the world. Even in his last days, lying on bed physically inactive, he translated *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* giving his profound purports. Thus he left behind a legacy that is being continued by his sincere followers whose hearts were touched by his warmth and spiritual depth.

Thus several great souls lived in this world by upholding virtuous principles, left behind in this world their own extraordinary accomplishments, teachings, legacies and personal examples, and departed to the spiritual realm to serve the Supreme Lord eternally. Human life is a rare gift. To utilize it effectively, one may derive inspiration from such role model personalities and learn the art of living and the art of leaving. ☀





All the big gigantic planets, including the sun, are being controlled by the force of air, as the **clouds** are carried by the force of **air**. Similarly, the inevitable **kāla**, or time, **controls** even the action of the air and other elements. Everything, therefore, is controlled by the supreme **kāla**, a forceful representative of the Lord within the material world. (SB 1.9.14 P)

The pastimes of the Lord, beginning from His birth at the prison house of Kāṁsa up to the mauṣala-līlā at the end, all move one after another in all the universes, just as the clock hand moves from one point to another. (SB 1.9.39 P)

The **sun** is identified with every inch of the **sun rays** and every molecular particle of the rays. Similarly, the **Lord** is distributed by His different energies. He is Paramātmā, or the Supersoul, present in everyone as the supreme guidance, and therefore He is already the chariot driver and counsel of all living beings. (SB 1.9.21 P)

ANALOGY ARENA

As the **rivers** draw water from the sea through the clouds and again go down to the **sea**, similarly **our energy** is borrowed from the supreme source, the **Lord's energy**, and it must return to the Lord. Whatever we do, whatever we undergo as penance, whatever we sacrifice, whatever we eat or whatever we give in charity must be offered to Him. (SB 1.9.27 P)

The **Lord** is served by all His parts and parcels, as the **complete machine** is served by its parts and parcels. Any **part** of the machine removed from the whole is no longer important. Similarly, any **part and parcel** of the Absolute detached from the service of the Lord is useless. (SB 1.9.44 P)

Just as the **spider** independently creates, maintains, and winds up his own net, without external help, similarly, the **Supreme Lord** independently creates, maintains and withdraws the cosmic manifestation by Himself. (SB 2.9.28 P)





PARI PRAŚNA

Question: The Absolute Truth is spiritual, beyond the infection of matter. So how can words that are supposed to be product of material nature describe Him? (Anil)

Answer: In the tenth canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Mahārāja Parīkṣit raises this question and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī answers it. He says that it is by mercy of the Supreme Lord that the words of Vedas can reveal Him, otherwise not. He gives an analogy to explain this.

If the Supreme Lord had not created the intelligence, mind and senses, then sound and the other objects of perception would all be just as indescribable as the Absolute. Everyone would have been blind and deaf since birth, and would know nothing about physical forms and sounds, what to speak of the Absolute. So, just as the merciful Lord has given us all faculties of perception for experiencing and describing to others the sensations of sight, sound and so forth, in the same way He may give someone the receptive capacity to realize Brahman.

He may, if He chooses, create some extraordinary way for words to function—apart from their ordinary references to material substances, qualities, categories and actions—that will enable them to express the Supreme Truth. He is, after all, the almighty Lord, and He can easily make the indescribable describable.

In SB 8.24.38, Lord Matsya assures King Satyavrata, "You will be thoroughly advised and favoured by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart."

Question: Why did the Lord tolerate the insult to Draupadī and other injustices perpetrated against the Pandavas by the Kurus? Why did He not chastise the Kurus immediately? (Ganganath)

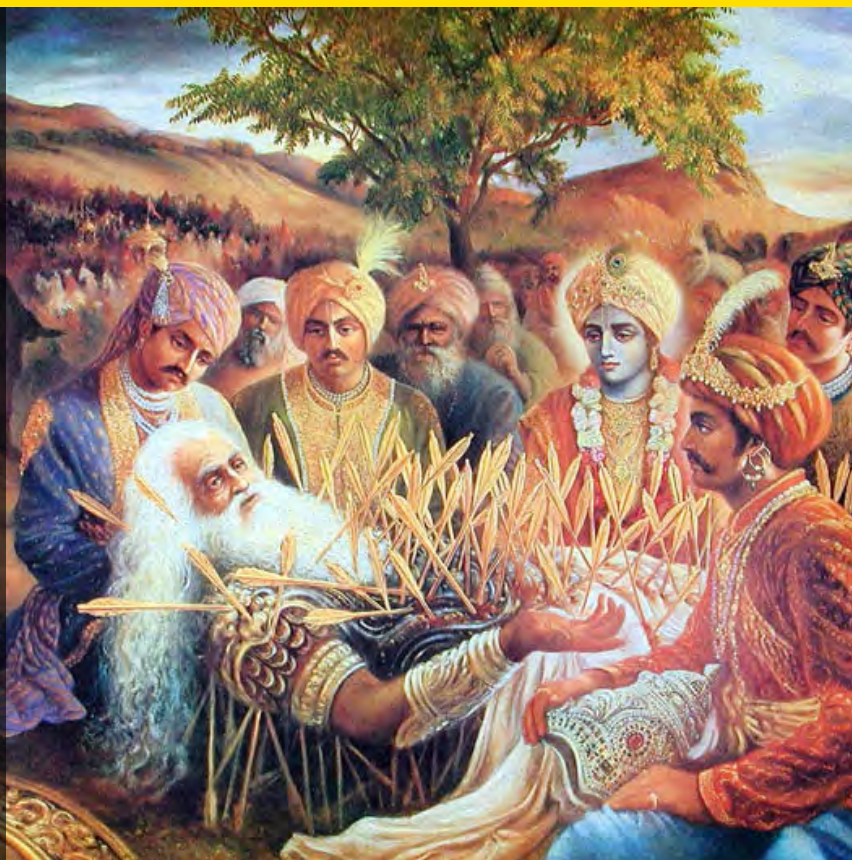
Answer: Although Lord Kṛṣṇa protected the Pāṇḍavas from the wrong doings of the Kurus, He did not immediately punish the Kurus. However, this does not mean that He excused their offences.

There were many other kings on earth who had become very proud of three kinds of possessions—wealth, education and followers—and they were constantly agitating the earth by movements of military strength. The Lord was just waiting to get them together on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra and kill them all at one time, just to make a short-cut in His killing mission. Godless kings or heads of state, puffed up by advancement of material wealth, education and increase of population, always make a show of military strength and give trouble to the innocent. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was personally present, there were many such kings all over the world, and He thus arranged for the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

The Lord always wants to see His devotee as the hero of some episode which He Himself performs. He wanted to see His devotee and friend Arjuna as the hero of the Battle of Kurukṣetra, and thus He waited for all the miscreants of the world to assemble. That is the explanation of His waiting.

Mail us at pradipika@vidyapitha.in your questions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of Bhāgavata Pradīpikā.





bhaktyāveśya mano yasmin
 vācā yan-nāma kīrtayan
 tyajan kalevaram yogī
 mucyate kāma-karmabhiḥ
 (SB 1.9.23)

The Personality of Godhead, who appears in the mind of the devotee by attentive devotion and meditation and by chanting of the holy name, releases the devotee from the bondage of fruitive activities at the time of his quitting the material body.

QUIZ CORNER

Fill the boxes based on the clues below.

1. As a military marshal, Bhiṣmadeva constantly remembered the form of _____
2. A saintly king
3. An example of great determination
4. The process of knowing and pleasing Bhagavān
5. Great grandfather of Dhruva Mahārāja
6. Mahārāja Parīkṣit prays for _____ relations with all living beings

Gather all the letters from the **green** boxes, **jumble** them and **fill** the following boxes.

Answer:

Mail your answer to pradipika@vidyapitha.in with “January Quiz Corner” in the subject. Names of the first three people who gave correct answers shall be published in the next issue.

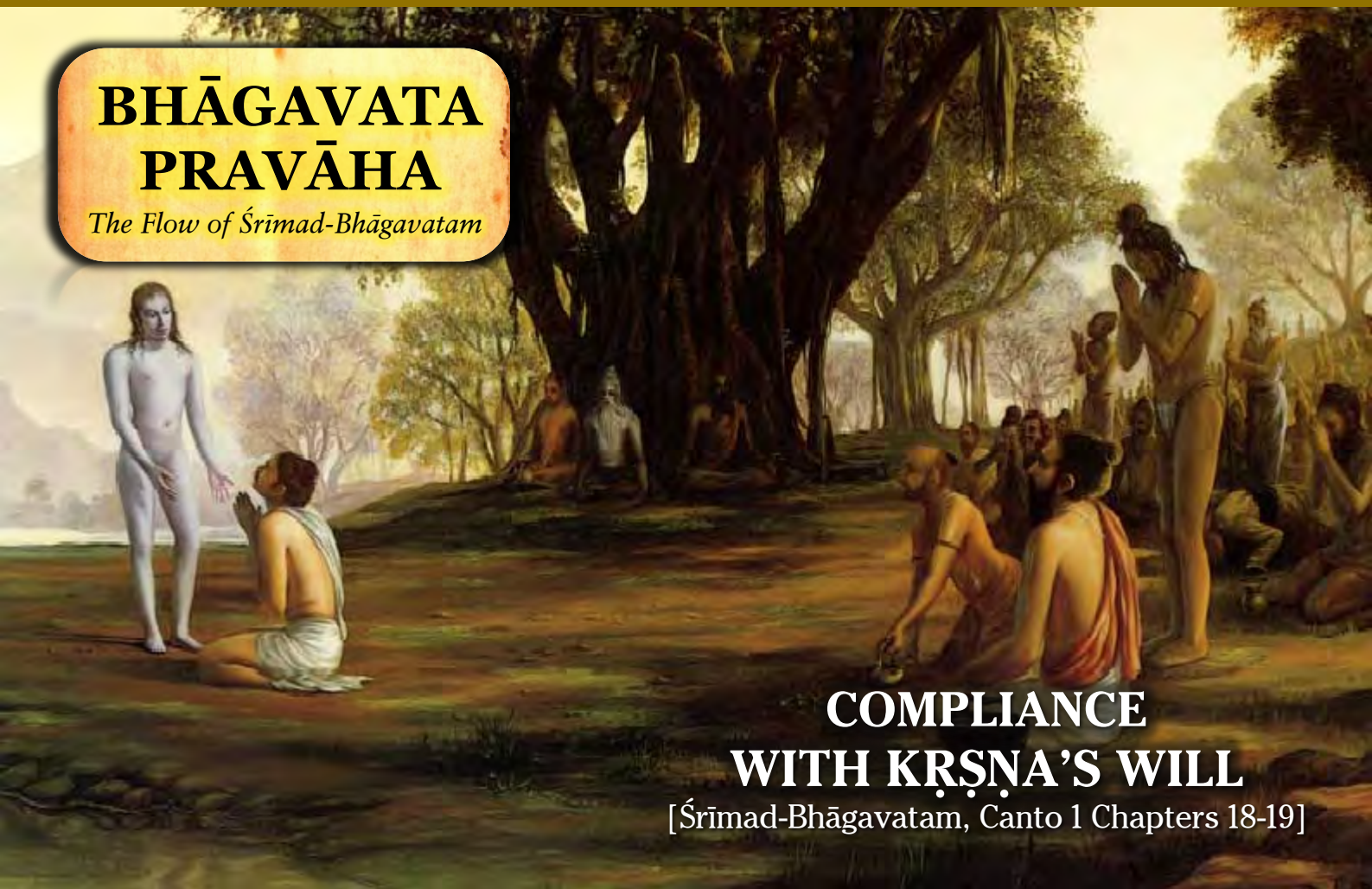
Answer for December Quiz Corner: BHAGAVAD GITA

First 3 persons who gave correct answers: Aniruddha Chakraborty, Malladi satyaadinarayana, Pritam De



BHĀGAVATA PRAVĀHA

The Flow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam



COMPLIANCE WITH KṚṢṆA'S WILL

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 1 Chapters 18-19]

Sūta Gosvāmī glorifies the powerful King Parīkṣit, whose fearless and religious rule protected his subjects in all ways (18.1-10). The sages not satiated by hearing topics related to Kṛṣṇa, request Sūta Gosvāmī to further describe how Parīkṣit Mahārāja attained the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa (18.11-17). Sūta Gosvāmī humbly presents himself to be born in mixed class, who is being cleansed of all disqualifications simply by serving and following the great souls. He then starts to describe the Lord to the best of his realization (18.18-19.40).

Actions Inspired by Destiny

Once while hunting in the forest, King Parīkṣit became extremely fatigued and thirsty. He entered the hermitage of Śamika ṛṣi and asked him for water. The sage who was sitting in meditation, with all his activities restrained, could not respond to the King's request. Receiving no formal welcome from the sage, the King felt neglected and became angry. He then picked up a lifeless snake with his bow and angrily placed it on the shoulder of the sage and returned to his palace. Upon returning, Mahārāja Parīkṣit began to contemplate and argue within himself whether the sage had actually been in meditation or whether he had just been feigning trance just to avoid receiving a lower *kṣatriya*.

Degradation of the Brāhmaṇas

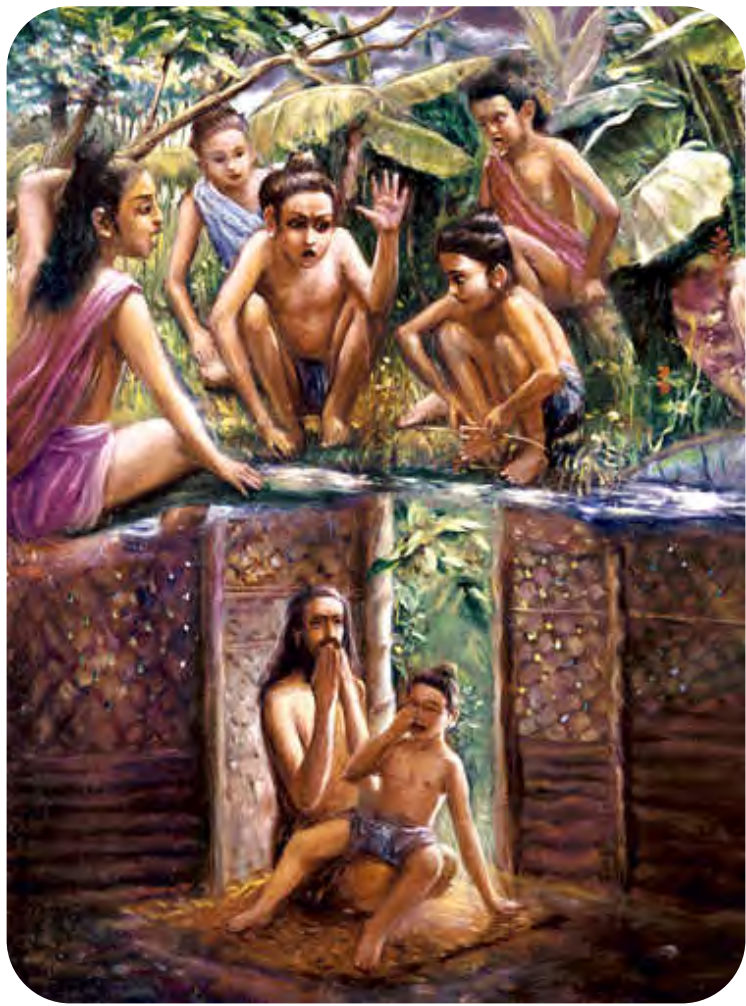
The sage's son named Śṛṅgī who was playing with inexperienced boys heard of his father's distress, occasioned by the King. Being puffed up with brahminical power, Śṛṅgī compared the King to a watchdog and said that it was wrong for the King to enter the home of a *brāhmaṇa* and ask for water from the same pot. Proud of his little *brahma-tejas* and being influenced by the spell of Kali-yuga, he designated the King to be an upstart. His eyes red-hot with anger, he touched the water of the river Kauśika and cursed the King, "On the seventh day from today a snake-bird will bite the most wretched one of that dynasty [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] because of his having broken the laws of etiquette by insulting my father." When Śamika ṛṣi came to know this he began to repent, saying: "Alas! What a great sinful act was performed by my immature son. He has awarded heavy punishment for an insignificant offense." The sage feared the fall of society from the path of progressive civilization, in absence of a saintly king. He did not take the insult paid by the King very seriously and prayed to the all-pervading Lord to pardon his immature son.



BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

Kāla is identical with the Lord Himself, and therefore the influence of kāla indicates the inexplicable wish of the Lord Himself. (SB 1.9.15 P)



Repentance – The Quality of a Good Soul

While returning home, the King felt he has committed a heinous act against the faultless *brāhmaṇa*. Consequently he became distressed. He thought, “I am uncivilized and sinful due to my neglect of brahminical culture. I wish that my kingdom, strength and riches burn up immediately by the fire of the *brāhmaṇa*'s wrath so that in the future I may not be guided by such inauspicious attitudes.”

Blessing in Disguise

While thus repenting, the King received news of his imminent death. He accepted this as good news, for it would cause his indifference towards worldly things. The devotees of the Lord are so forbearing that even though they are defamed, cheated, cursed, disturbed, neglected or even killed, they are never inclined to avenge themselves. Mahārāja Parīkṣit, although capable of counter acting the curse, accepted the curse to be the will of the Lord. He thought “Due to my being too much attached to family life, the Lord, in order to save me, has appeared before me in such a way that only out of fear I will detach myself from the world.”

An Admirable Departure

Mahārāja Parīkṣit sat on the bank of the Ganges' to fast until death and give himself up to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. At that time all the great sages like Atri, Cyavana, Śaradvān, Ariṣṭanemi, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Parāśara, Viśvāmitra, Aṅgirā, Paraśurāma, Dvaipāyana and Nārada arrived there, from all parts of the universe, on the plea of making a pilgrim's journey. He offered himself to them and wished to hear the deeds of Lord Kṛṣṇa from them. He prayed “If I should again take my birth in the material world I will have complete attachment to the unlimited Lord Kṛṣṇa, association with His devotees and friendly relations with all living beings.” The sages became pleased to see Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the foremost devotee of the Lord, and decided to wait there until he returns to the supreme planet. He inquired to the sages about duty of everyone in all circumstances and specifically of those who are just about to die.

Arrival of Śukadeva Gosvāmī

At that moment, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the powerful son of Vyāsadeva, appeared there. His exalted glories was being covered from the eyes of general populace. However the great sages expert in the art of physiognomy recognised him and honoured him by rising from their seats. The great devotee, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, approached him, offered his respects by bowing before him, and politely inquired with sweet words and folded hands.

Parīkṣit submits to Śukadeva Gosvāmī

He said “O *brāhmaṇa*, by your mercy only, you have sanctified us, making us like unto places of pilgrimage, all by your presence here as my guest. By your mercy, we, who are but unworthy royalty, become eligible to serve the devotee. Certainly Lord Kṛṣṇa has accepted me as one of the relatives, just to please His great cousins, Pāṇḍavas. Otherwise what else could inspire you to have voluntarily appeared here? Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.”

This completes the first canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Śukadeva Gosvāmī begins to answer the queries of King Parīkṣit in second canto.

To be continued.





BHĀGAVATA TATTVAMĀLĀ

A Garland of Philosophical Truths

218 SELECTED BHAGAVATAM VERSES

CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO VARIOUS TATTVAS

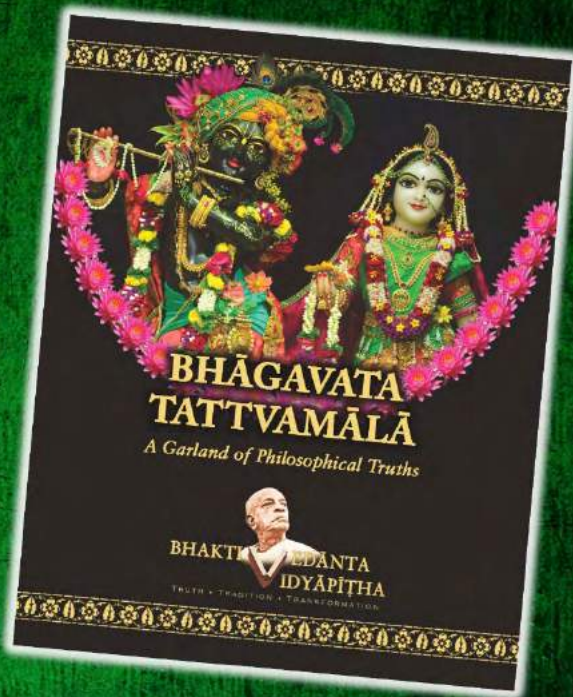
jiva-tattva	sakti-tattva	bhakti-tattva	
guru-tattva	krishna-tattva	lila-tattva	rasa-tattva
nama-tattva	bhagavata-tattva	vaishnava-tattva	

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BHAGAVATA SUBODHINI is a praiseworthy project for deepening our appreciation of the Bhagavatam, particularly from the insight of Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti. By concisely organizing his analysis of the work, the devotee will be able to relish both the Bhagavatam and Śrila Visvanatha Cakravarti's realizations. – HH BHANU SWAMI

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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-saṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)

1.1.1 V: From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

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"BHAKTIVEDANTA VIDYAPITHA AT A GLANCE"

A Short Video on the Activities of the Vidyapitha

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PE9yL_1mEFc